

HARVARD CHARTER COMMISSION
04/19/16 Meeting Minutes
Hapgood Room, Interim Town Hall

Members present: Paul Cohen, Cindy Russo, George McKenna, Ron Ostberg, Stephanie Opalka, Sharon McCarthy, Peter Warren, Charles Redinger, Rick Maiore
Others present: Janet Vallente (Town Clerk); John Osborn (Harvard Press); Worth Robbins

Janet Vallente called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM and as the first order of business asked for nominations for Chairperson. Paul Cohen was nominated and seconded, nominations were closed and Paul Cohen was elected Chair. Janet Vallente advised the members that by statute we were required to have an initial public hearing within 45 days of 4/12 (election day). Paul Cohen thanked Janet Vallente and called for nominations for Vice Chairperson, Cindy Russo was nominated and seconded, nominations were closed and Cindy Russo was elected Vice Chair. Paul Cohen called for nominations for Clerk. Charles Redinger and Rick Maiore were nominated and seconded, nominations were closed and Rick Maiore was elected Clerk.

Paul Cohen stated that the Wellesley Charter was rejected at a recent town election, Peter Warren took an action item to get information on the rejection by the voters.

The MMA was identified as a source for both information on the statute and for charter initiative experiences and statistical information of commonwealth towns. Paul Cohen would identify a prime contact(s) at MMA.

Discussion: The Collins Center @ UMASS Boston as a analyzing resource, similar to the audit they conducted of the Harvard DPW. All were to review this issue and be prepared at next meeting to present comments.

Discussion: mandatory initial public hearing. Thursday @ 7PM, May 25th was the date selected. The location to be determined by availability of the new TH meeting room. The Clerk to secured a meeting place and legal posting. It was felt that the posting should give some direction to the attending public as to what the CC felt would be most useful at this time. Ron Ostberg took an action item to draft an enhanced posting message.

Discussion: "Consider This " would be useful in educating public on the CC mission. Action item: George McKenna and Stephanie Opalka to produce a draft "Consider This" for insertion in the 5/20 Harvard Press publication.

Discussion: Putting our current town structure in a charter format background. All agreed this would be a clarifying tool for the first phase of our mission and we would pursue further at our next meeting.

Discussion: Budget, clerical support and meeting rooms. Rick Maiore took an action item to report back options and findings.

Discussion: Town of Groton Charter. Since Groton has many similarities to Harvard and they have gone through the charter process all felt it useful to view the Groton charter and mission as a possible template which we could adapt to our needs. Sharon McCarthy took an action item to report back.

Discussion: Remote access was deemed a useful tool, both within the commission and as a public communication tool. Options for group communication using shared documents, were discussed--Google Docs and Microsoft tools. For public communications, Next Door Harvard, a blog and Harvard Matters were options. Sharon McCarthy took an action item to report back.

Worth Robbins was invited to our next meeting to illustrate what he has set up and allow for how this would fit into our mission.

By consensus we agreed to start by holding two meetings a month on the first and third Thursdays. The Clerk's notes record that these would be PM meetings with the second meeting every other month being an evening meeting with a public forum/input component.

Meeting adjourned 8:45 PM
Rick Maiore
Clerk